

# pipeline



♦ SUMMER 2008

A NEWSLETTER FOR CUSTOMERS OF THE OTAY WATER DISTRICT



## “Save it or Lose it”

Southern California is faced with significant cuts in water supplies from Northern California in the foreseeable future and diminishing levels of water storage around California.

“Our water supplies are being cut, and we need everyone to pull together and save more water immediately,” said Fern Steiner, the San Diego County Water Authority Board Chair.

You may have noticed new conservation advertising around the county these past couple months. “This campaign is designed to make people aware that these cutbacks have created a serious and very real water problem, and to let them know that they can make a big difference in the reliability of our water supply by taking immediate steps now to reduce waste and improve water efficiency,” Steiner said. “If we fail to take action, we risk squandering our diminishing supplies and putting the quality of life for our region’s 3 million residents and our \$157 billion economy in jeopardy.”

The state’s water supplies remain impacted by a combination of dry conditions and pumping restrictions. Despite storm activity early in 2008,

rain and snow levels around most of the state fell to below-average levels in March through June. Meanwhile, based on environmental concerns, court-ordered pumping restrictions on water supplies from Northern California have been in place since December 2007. These restrictions have cut deliveries to the State Water Project by more than 465,000 acre-feet so far this year – enough water to meet the annual needs of more than 3.6 million Californians.

The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD), the region’s primary water importer, plans to meet this year’s water demands by withdrawing water from reservoirs and groundwater storage accounts. However, they are also calling for extraordinary conservation measures.

For instance, supply constraints have prompted the MWD to order a 30 percent cut in water supplies to farmers and growers subscribing to its Interruptible Agricultural Water Program as provided by contract terms. The agricultural water use cut went into effect January 1, 2008 and affects about 5,000 growers and

other agricultural customers in San Diego County. As a result, many of the region’s farmers and growers have begun stumping trees or taking other steps to cut production. These actions will have a ripple effect on jobs and on our local economy.

Economically, less supply and

Otay Water District  
**DROUGHT WATCH**

**LEVEL IV - DROUGHT EMERGENCY**  
Stop all landscape irrigation, except crops and landscape products of commercial growers and nurseries.

**LEVEL III - DROUGHT CRITICAL**  
Limit residential and commercial landscape irrigation.

**LEVEL II - DROUGHT ALERT**  
Limit residential and commercial landscape irrigation.

**LEVEL I - DROUGHT WATCH**  
Voluntary water restrictions apply.

For specific restrictions visit [www.otaywater.gov](http://www.otaywater.gov)

### Otay Water District Declares Level I Drought Watch

In response to Governor Schwarzenegger’s California state drought proclamation, the Otay Water District (OWD) has declared a Level I Drought Watch for its service area. Within this level, ratepayers are strongly urged to reduce their water use by 10%.

high demand is making water purchases more expensive. Higher energy prices are also adding to the cost because we must pump this water hundreds of miles to Southern California. Combined, these are factors which will effect water rates in 2009. Our best defense against high prices or mandatory water conservation measures is YOU.

For incentives or tips on saving water around your home or business, visit our website at [www.otaywater.gov](http://www.otaywater.gov) or take the 20-Gallon Challenge at [www.20gallonchallenge.com](http://www.20gallonchallenge.com).

**You never miss it until it's gone**

We need your help. Our imported water supplies have been cut, so we need to reduce water use immediately. Your efforts can make a big difference now, and for San Diego County's future. Visit [20gallonchallenge.com](http://20gallonchallenge.com) to learn more, and to find easy ways to save water.

**Water: Save it or Lose it**  
[www.20gallonchallenge.com](http://www.20gallonchallenge.com)

# Water

H<sub>2</sub>O=Life



San Diego Natural History Museum Presents: **West Coast Premiere of:**

## **Water: H<sub>2</sub>O = Life Exhibition Explores Earth's Precious and Vulnerable Resource**

Celebrate water, our natural resource – more valuable than oil, more precious than gold – the essential ingredient of our life, culture, and history. The Water: H<sub>2</sub>O = Life exhibition opens July 19, 2008 and runs through November 30, 2008. A special section of the exhibition devoted exclusively to Southern California's water issues will be on display at the Museum for at least two years. That section, titled Water: A California Story, illustrates the fragility of water supplies in the west.

In Southern California, most of the water—about 85%—is imported from either the Colorado River or Northern California. Since recent drought conditions have affected the water supply from the Colorado River, and because San Diego is in the driest two-year period since yearly rainfall began being recorded in 1801, the issue of water conservation and infrastructure is at the forefront of many people's minds.

# CASH FOR PLANTS



The photo on the right was taken before August 10, 2005, and below one year later. This road median was replanted as part of the district's Cash for Plants program. The homeowner's association replaced 6,537 sq. ft. of irrigated turf with low water use Mediterranean and California native plants. In addition to using less water, the median also requires less frequent maintenance. In the before photo, notice the street damage caused by overspray from the irrigation system.

Because of the savings resulting from the replanted median as well as the attractive new landscaping, the HOA has completed another project replacing 11,000 more sq. ft. of turf. For more information on the Cash for Plants program, visit our website at [www.otaywater.gov](http://www.otaywater.gov) and click on Conservation.



## JULY IS...

### Smart Irrigation Month!

Save water, save money and  
see better results.

[www.smartirrigationmonth.org](http://www.smartirrigationmonth.org)

#### OTAY WATER DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board of Directors meets on the first Wednesday of the month at 3:30 pm in the Board meeting room. The public is encouraged to attend at 2554 Sweetwater Spring Blvd., Spring Valley, CA.

##### President

Gary Croucher, Division 3  
[groucher@otaywater.gov](mailto:groucher@otaywater.gov)

##### Vice-President

Jose Lopez, Division 4  
[jlopez@otaywater.gov](mailto:jlopez@otaywater.gov)

##### Treasurer

Jaime Bonilla, Division 2  
[jbbonilla@otaywater.gov](mailto:jbbonilla@otaywater.gov)

##### Boardmember

Mark Robak, Division 5  
[OtayWater@cox.net](mailto:OtayWater@cox.net)

##### Boardmember

Larry Breitfelder, Division 1  
[lbreitfelder@otaywater.gov](mailto:lbreitfelder@otaywater.gov)



## 2008 California-Friendly Landscape Contest Winner

Congratulations to Linda Whitney, the winner of the 5th Annual California Friendly Landscape contest. Her home in the EastLake community of Chula Vista was selected as the best regional example of a water saving, California Friendly garden. Linda and her husband Gordon received a \$500 gift certificate presented at a special ceremony on Saturday, May 17, and a commemorative paver that will be installed at the Water Conservation Garden in Rancho San Diego. To view photos of all the winning landscapes, visit [www.landscapecontest.com](http://www.landscapecontest.com).



## Bye Bye Grass

**Lawns are so demanding!** No other garden plants require as much water or as frequent fertilizing. None require weekly pruning (mowing, after all, is pruning), made even worse by the need for power tools. No plants generate as much green waste either.

### Isn't it time to say "bye-bye" to your lawn — or at least to most of it?

Summertime is the best time to eliminate your lawn. The best method depends on the type of grass you have. Or rather, on the type of roots your grass has. Dig up a patch of grass. Are the roots fine and threadlike? Or are they as thick and fleshy like the roots that grow out of an old potato? Here are some suggestions for each kind of grass. There are more options but these will get you started.

Grasses with thread-like roots are fairly easy to remove. If you have a strong back (or a strong teenager), dig it out by hand. Or rent a sod cutter. A sod cutter is a bit like a lawn mower, but it has a broad blade that cuts into the ground and slices out a ribbon of grass. It takes some skill to maneuver, especially to avoid hitting sprinkler pipes.

Solarize your grass. Cover the grass with sheets of plastic (clear or black), then let the sun "cook" the grass, roots and all. Solarization works best for grass in full sun, in parts of the county that get really hot. Gardeners along the coast may have little success with solarization.

Alternatively, spray your grass with one of the new organic certified products or with horticultural grade vinegar (10 - 20% acetic acid. Household vinegar is typically 5% acetic acid). Once the grass blades are dead, fine roots die too. Follow all label directions.

Grasses with thick, creeping roots are harder to kill, unfortunately. They store energy in their roots (that's why they are so thick). If you kill the top growth, blades soon resprout. Roots are so brittle that digging them leaves tiny pieces behind to resprout and regrow.

Even most organic gardeners will tell you that the only way to kill fleshy-root grasses roots is with glyphosate, the active ingredient in products like Roundup™ and Remuda™.

Glyphosate interferes with the synthesis of an enzyme critical to plant metabolism. Insects and animals (that includes humans) don't make this enzyme so it doesn't have the same effect on us. And once the spray dries, it is no longer active.

The best time to spray glyphosate is in summer when grass is growing most actively. Follow label directions. Wait two weeks then spray any grass that is still alive. Repeat a third time if necessary.

For more details and information on what to plant in place of grass, attend "Bye Bye Grass" offered at The Water Conservation Garden, [www.TheGarden.org](http://www.TheGarden.org).

Copyright © Nan Sterman 2008. All rights reserved

Saturday, July 12, 9:30am-12:30pm

### XERISCAPE: Beautiful Landscape on a Low-Water Budget

Landscape Designer Connie Beck takes the mystery out of Xeriscape landscaping, and shows you why Xeriscape is not "Zeroscape"! Learn the seven principles of xeriscape, plant selection, and planting techniques. The workshop includes a classroom lecture and an interpretive tour of the xeriscape garden. This class is offered in partnership with Cuyamaca College's Community Learning Program. For information and to register, call 619-660-4350, or visit [www.cuyamaca.edu/preview](http://www.cuyamaca.edu/preview). Cost is \$30.

Saturday, July 19, 10am-12pm

### Cooking with Native Plants

Cook with a local resource....native plants! Native plant expert Lisa Chaddock shows you where to gather these plants growing wild in San Diego, and how to use them to make tasty dishes at home. Elderberry, fennel, and flat top buckwheat are some of the foods you'll be introduced to. Included in the price of the class is Lisa's cookbook and a locator map for finding native edibles growing in San Diego. Register at [www.thegarden.org](http://www.thegarden.org)

\$12 Members / \$15 Non-Members.

July 23, July 30, 6:30 - 8:30 pm

### Bye Bye Grass! Parts 1 & 2

Part 1: Tired of being a slave to your water-thirsty lawn? Join Nan Sterman to learn how to exterminate your lawn for good! Learn how to prepare the soil for a new garden, along with lots of creative ideas on what to replace it with in Part 2: Your lawn is gone! Nan will guide you through living examples of water-wise landscapes, show you interesting drought-tolerant ground covers, and introduce you to the variety of hardscape options. Register at [www.thegarden.org](http://www.thegarden.org).

JULY CLASSES  
AT THE Garden

# “¡O se ahorra o se pierde!”

Enfrentamos significativos recortes en el suministro de agua del Norte de California en un futuro no muy lejano y la reducción a, los niveles de almacenamiento de agua en todo California.

“Nuestro suministro de agua está siendo recortado, y necesitamos unirnos todos y ahorrar agua inmediatamente,” dijo Fern Steiner, Presidenta de la Mesa Directiva de Agua del Condado de San Diego.

“Esta campaña se encuentra diseñada para crear conciencia en la gente de que estos recortes han creado un serio y verdadero problema acerca del agua, y para hacerles saber que pueden hacer una gran diferencia en cuanto a la durabilidad de nuestros recursos de abastecimiento de agua tomando medidas inmediatas para reducir el desperdicio de agua y mejorar la eficiencia de uso” dijo Steiner. “Si no hacemos algo al respecto, corremos el riesgo de desperdiciar nuestro ya reducido abastecimiento y arriesgamos la calidad de vida de los 3 millones de residentes poniendo en peligro nuestra economía de \$57 billones de dólares.

Los recursos de abastecimiento de agua del estado

continúan siendo afectados debido a una combinación de clima seco y restricciones de bombeo. A pesar de la gran actividad de lluvias a principios del 2008, los niveles de lluvia y nevada en la mayor parte del estado durante los meses de marzo a junio han estado por debajo del promedio normal. Mientras tanto, la orden de la corte de restringir el bombeo de abastecimiento de agua del norte de California ha estado vigente desde diciembre del 2007. Estas restricciones han recortado las entregas para el Proyecto Estatal de Agua (State Water Project) por más de 465,000 acres-pies hasta este año – cantidad de agua suficiente para satisfacer la necesidad anual de más de 3.6 millones de californianos.

El Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD), el mayor importador de agua en la región, planea cumplir con la demanda de agua para este año extrayendo agua de las reservas y cuentas de almacenamiento de aguas subterráneas. Sin embargo, también éstas están solicitando obtener medidas de conservación extraordinarias.

Por ejemplo, limitaciones de abastecimiento han provocado al MWD ordenar una reducción del 30% de abastecimiento de agua para rancheros y agricultores inscritos en el programa de abastecimiento ininterrumpido (Interruptible Agricultural Water Program). El recorte de agua agrícola entró en efecto el 1º de enero del 2008 y afecta a aproximadamente 5,000 agricultores y otros clientes agrícolas en el condado de San Diego. Como resultado, muchos de los rancheros y agricultores de la región han

Otay Water District  
**ESTADO DE VIGILANCIA POR SEQUÍA**

**SEQUÍA - NIVEL IV  
ESTADO DE EMERGENCIA**  
Alto al riego de jardines, excepto a cosechas, productos de jardinería de agricultores comerciales y viveros.

**SEQUÍA - NIVEL III  
ESTADO CRÍTICO**  
Riego limitado de jardines comerciales y residenciales.

**SEQUÍA - NIVEL II  
ESTADO DE ALERTA**  
Riego limitado de jardines comerciales y residenciales.

**SEQUÍA - NIVEL I  
ESTADO DE VIGILANCIA**  
Aplican restricciones voluntarias al uso del agua.

For specific restrictions visit [www.otaywater.gov](http://www.otaywater.gov)

## Otay Water District Declara Estado de Vigilancia por Sequía Nivel I

En respuesta a la proclamación de sequía del estado de California por el Gobernador Schwarzenegger, Otay Water District (OWD) ha declarado Estado de vigilancia por Sequía Nivel I para su área de servicio. Dentro de este nivel se exhorta a los usuarios reducir su uso del agua por un 10%.

tenido que comenzar a limpiar tocones o tomado otras medidas para reducir la producción. Estas acciones tendrán un efecto de cascada en trabajos de nuestra economía local.

Para incentivos o consejos para ahorrar agua alrededor de su casa o negocio, por favor visita nuestra página web [www.otaywater.gov](http://www.otaywater.gov) o tome el reto de los 20 galones de agua en [www.20gallonchallenge.com](http://www.20gallonchallenge.com).



FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE OTAY WATER DISTRICT CALL 619.670.2222 OR GO TO [WWW.OTAYWATER.GOV](http://WWW.OTAYWATER.GOV)